

COUNTERFEITERS' NEW SCHEME

How the Smooth Demonstrator Gets His Victim's Coin.

"One of the latest schemes of the counterfeit money swindlers is to show gullible people a machine with which they can print for themselves large size bills, imitative of Government currency," said Capt. S. F. Rhodes, formerly of the secret service. "This money producing machine has a smooth demonstrator who will, after getting a prospective victim interested, turn the crank and grind out a \$20 note, which, it is needless to say, is genuine. The victim shows the bill to a bank cashier, and hears it pronounced good, and his mercenary nature being aroused, he sees visions of gigantic wealth, and hands over to Mr. Sharp \$500, or at least \$250, for the instrument that is going to make him a Rockefeller. It is needless to say that the subsequent specimens turned out are such miserable imitations that they would hardly fool a blind man, but the ignoramus is in a place where he can't make a roar for his lost money."

The Swaying Skyscraper.

Through the chance of perfect adjustment in the way of balance, of a row of large photographs that hang on a wall of an office building down town the clerks in the place have a good deal of quiet amusement with persons who visit the place for the first time. Owing to this balance the pictures are easily swayed by the wind that blows through the open windows and since the office force goes in for fresh air the year round the pictures are never still. The joke lies in catching the horrified expression on the faces of the callers when they get a sight of the swinging frames. Then it is always explained with due solemnity, if the boss is not around that the swaying of the frames is due to the oscillation of the structure. It usually takes some time for the object of the joke to see the point. Meanwhile he has suffered a considerable shock.—N. Y. World.

Odd South American Animals.

Many curious animals haunt the marshy parts of South America north of the pampas. Frogs big and ferocious, given to making vicious springs when closely approached; the capybara, a cavy "contented with the bulk of a sheep"; the huge coypu rat and the swarthy piglike tapir are frequently seen. Along the forest margins troops of peccaries are often met with, occasionally the jaguar sometimes the puma, likewise that toothless curiosity, the great ant bear, long in claw, long nosed and remarkably long tongued. A familiar object is the great jabiru, a stork with a preference for the desolate lagoons, where it may often be observed statuesque on one leg and wrapped in prospection.—Scotsman.

The Ginkgo Tree.

Studies by Miss M. C. Stopes of the fossil flora of Scotland have shown that the ginkgo or maidenhair tree, a native of Japan and China, which is cultivated in Europe and this country on account of its remarkable foliage, belongs to an extremely ancient family, of which it is now, apparently, the last surviving representative. At one time it seems to have been widely spread. A singular fact is that the fossil specimens of the ginkgo, found in the rock beds of the Inferior Oolite series, at Broxa, Scotland, are so similar to the living trees that at first sight no difference is apparent. Only an examination of the structure of the cells reveals a variation.—Youth's Companion.

For Pressing Plaited Skirts.

Plaited Skirts which have been washed are difficult to press. Time and expense may be saved by having the work done after the following method, which is for woollen skirts especially: Before the skirt has become badly creased or rumpled run a basting thread, using short, even stitches, down the entire length of each crease which marks the folds of the plait. By this means, after the skirt has been washed, the proper location of each fold can readily be determined, and the pressing done successfully.

Balzac in Church Pew.

The woman who had left a volume of Balzac in the church pew on prayer meeting night felt a little bit ashamed when she asked for the book, but the sexton assured her she need not feel that way. "Many things are left in the church," he said, "and some of them are a whole lot less respectable than Balzac. After each service the pews yield a strange grist of forgotten or discarded articles."

A Clever Bear.

A noted ethnologist observed in Vienna a bear deliberately making with his paw, a current in some water which was close to the bars of his cage so as to draw a piece of floating bread within his reach. These actions of the bear could hardly be attributed to instinct or inherited habit, as they would be of little use to an animal in a state of nature.

Quill Toothpicks.

The largest quill toothpick factory in the world is near Paris, where there is an annual product of 20,000,000 quills. The factory was started to make quill pens, but when these went out of general use it was converted into a toothpick mill.

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